

Wednesday, Oct 6, 2021, 6:30pm RNST *Virtual Coaches'* Pre-season Zoom Meeting Agenda & Minutes

Attendees: Barry, Dave H, Joan, Rich, Catherine, Bob M, John R, Roberto, Jennifer L, Darald, Shawn, Anna, Steve F, Jim B, Peter, Sarah J, Kristin S, Robb, Kelly, Maureen, Jakob R, Jennifer L, Henry W, Michael O, Piersan (welcome 2 new coaches: Jakob Ratele and Brett Ostby).

- 1) Ski Camp status for 2021-2022 season (John R).
 - a) Scheduled for Jan 7 through 9th.
 - b) Similar to last event.
 - c) Cost a bit higher.
 - d) Anyone attending must be vaccinated.
 - e) Evaluating mask mandate guidelines.

- 2) Any covid updates or summary (Joan)?
 - a) If skiers aren't vaccinated, they need to wear masks at the beginning and end of practice, when all the kids are gathered, and aren't actually exercising.
 - b) Targeting to hold all practices outside. The dome still unknown.
 - c) If we have any indoor practices, unvaccinated skiers should wear masks, and whether everyone else should perhaps should depend on the activity. If we're doing yoga, it's recommended we could ask everyone to wear masks and make them spread out.
 - d) It is highly recommended that all coaches be vaccinated (a firmer decision is still being considered).
 - e) Also, a useful suggestion for the situation where kids might be unvaccinated and their parents might want them to wear masks, but the kids don't. We might handle it the way we do asthma inhalers. If parents tell us the kids need them, we can verify that they have one.

- 3) David: We initiated some classic technique training sessions this past winter (and agreed to continue this plan) aimed at RNST skiers participating in CXC Races where 50% of races are classic. For this coming season we plan to hold optional classic skiing sessions on Wednesday afternoons. Those sessions will be divided into a group for experienced classic skiers planning on doing CXC Races and skiers learning classic for the first time. Coach Andy Wood has agreed to coordinate and other coaches have volunteered to help (Katherine Argo, Jim Bennett, Mike Trantow, Grant Webber, Barry Knapp). Skiers will be responsible for bringing equipment, although it's likely most could use their skate boots for classic. We hope to acquire 5-10 pairs of good skin skis for next season (if possible, given long backorders for skis) that could be used by skiers planning to race.
 - a) Andy Wood to lead.
 - b) For the few skiers that are racing, they should purchase skis that fit. The club will reimburse and own the skis.

- 4) David: We hoped to launch an expanded junior program, for skiers younger than 7th grade, with both a learn to ski group, who learn on fishscale classic skis and also a freestyle group for younger skiers who want to skate ski and maybe participate in races. Winona and Red Wing have strong programs, and we saw many of Red Wing's younger racers when we went to their race this year. However, we have not been able to find someone willing to coordinate the Community Ed program that Don Pankowski, with help from coaches and volunteers, did so well the past number of years. Unless we can find a replacement coordinator immediately, we will likely need to curtail our junior skier program and plans.

Quarry Hill is willing to host the 6 Community Ed sessions starting mid January, and Quarry Hill and Tyrol will also have fishscale skis available to rent. **If anyone is interested/willing to help coordinate this important Comm Ed program, -or- if you think of someone who might be interested, please contact David.**

- a) David working to identify a lead. Will publish something in RCE that a coordinator is needed by early December. If no one is identified, may consider rotating from the current coach base.

5) RNST INVITE (Mike T.)

Eastwood no longer groomed by City of Rochester (switching their resources to Gamehaven)

We can choose the venue/location closer to the date, based on best snow conditions:

Options: Essex/Gamehaven/Eastwood (last = if we groom for low-snow-conditions ourselves)

Date: Jan 24, 2022 Monday (To Be Finalized)

note Inviting other local HS teams involves syncing the date, plus verifying signed insurance waivers

6) LOOPY LOPPET - RNST & Citizen Race (requires sign up for insurance) (Mike T.)

We did this successfully for the first time in 2020, but skipped 2021

When and Where should we do it 2022?..

WHEN: Proposed Date Feb 19, 2022 Saturday ... (one week before Birkie as before)

WHERE: Could be Gamehaven or Essex - Maybe we let snow conditions dictate venue again? Also sync up with the City

COST: Special Event Insurance ~\$118 for 50 skiers+4 volunteers (we had 55 skiers and 8 volunteers, mostly RNST team)

maybe increase \$10 entry fee for non-RNST-ers to cover? (we had some bigger donations to make \$375).

- a) Question on how wavers will be handled.
- b) Eastwood no longer groomed.

7) Any updates on a license for some coaches to use the phone app called Coaches Eye? David: We planned to fund coaches acquiring the Coaches Eye app, but received news from the company that makes/supports it that they are discontinuing the app

- a) Coaches Eye app is no longer available.
- b) Videoing skiers is a valuable teaching/learning tool and encourage coaches to use available resources (phone, iPad, etc) when applicable.

8) There is a loosely formed "committee" to both work with the city Parks and Rec dept and mull over ideas for getting a railing on the smaller Essex bridge (Mike, Andy, Joe, Curt, Darald, Rich, Bruce, Barry). **If anyone else would like to help out or has ideas, let one of us know.**

- a) Notified P&R of our intent.
- b) Mike T has agreed to lead the effort. Thank you, Mike!!

9) Gamehaven snowmaking update (Jim Bennett)

Note, there is an attachment of the *trails at Gamehaven* on this meeting announcement email (a big thanks to Jim).

1. The map is not finalized, but getting pretty close.
2. The purple trail is not being developed at this time; it may be used if our trails going up and down the sledding hill need to be moved once the City adds the uphill lift and tubing lanes.
3. The blue trail in the NE corner may not be developed this season, needs a bridge, but it might still happen this fall.
4. There is a total of around 12 Km.
5. The green trail and the blue oval at the top will be man made snow. Right now it's about 3.2 Km, I think. The oval will be filled in with snow to make a flattish teaching area. The ultimate length of man made trail will depend on how much snow we can get made. The city plans on making snow 24 hours a day if the weather is cooperative. I estimate one could make all the snow needed in about a week or two theoretically. **They will need volunteers to help, so we will be asking for help. We need money too; we upped our commitment to 200K, so if you have any extra cash....**

6. Most of the park has been mowed, though some areas have grown back. The lower areas in the NW corner are really long grass, and are not yet mowed. Some areas are pretty rough, don't know how much leveling the city will do.

7. The trails are staked, except for the NE blue trail and the purple trail. They are staked as if you are skiing each trail in a clockwise fashion, with orange on the right and blue on the left. If there is paint on both sides, that means its a double, two way section. If there are two colors on one of the inside stakes it means there are two trails right next to each other going the same way. Some of the stakes near the new parking lot keep getting knocked down, so might not be there. If you like, you can try hiking them, but I suggest taking a copy of this map to help navigate. There are three short areas that need trees removed and are marked, on center, with red flagging tape.

8. The park is open. The parking lot is accessed from 50th street. One needs to drive through a gate that is still only open during the days M-F. That should change soon.

9. The city will likely make snow on the sledding hill this year.

10. We may need some marking or snow fencing to keep folks from walking up the hill on our trail.

11. While there are quite a bit of flats out there, the sledding hill is about a 90' drop and up to 14 degree grade, so it is our own Birkie hill, will be a workout. The west trail has about a dozen decent climbs too, so it may occasionally take your breath away.

12. The city will groom. They are not going to groom eastwood this year. We understand that the grooming will not likely be as frequent as if done by RASC, but the groomer is the same guy, John Munson, that groomed eastwood, so it will be done well. We will have to see how it all plays out. The city has purchased a Pisten Bully to groom the man made snow.

13. Oh, the best one: The city signed the purchase agreement last week (ie, mid-Sept, '21); equipment is due to be delivered early THIS DECEMBER! There are a few things that could derail getting it going this season including: late delivery, denial of the water permit, not getting the pump house constructed, and who knows what else, but right now I am REALLY EXCITED BECAUSE WE MAY VERY WELL HAVE MAN MADE SNOW IN ROCHESTER THIS SEASON!
Did I say I was excited?

- Target to have manmade snow this year! May be limited but progress is being made.
- Jim reviewed a map of the man made snow trails.
- Propose to P&R that RASC would fund to bring someone with snow making experience to train the Rochester groomers.

10) Get a photo of each skier at registration time (or early in season) to show along with the groups at practice to help (especially beginner) coaches get to learn names. **Great idea; what's a good way to do this? Who could take this on?**

- a) Not sure of intent.
- b) Suggestion: Put skiers name on duck tape on their skis.
- c) Barry to sent a poll to coaches on preferences.

11) For the non-beginner groups (1,2,3,4), have a printout or softcopy list of the kids in each group to help those coaches. It would be very helpful for the coaches to learn the skier names; it does not have to be every practice, but every week or two. **Is there a non-beginner group coach who could work with Joan to compile lists kind of like we do for the beginner groups?**

12) EOS coaches' happy hour was held at Coach Andy's acreage. **Is there a consensus to continue doing it this way in May, rather than doing it at Whistle Binkies in February, or do both :-)?**

- a) Yes for Andy's farm!!!!
- b) And, do a Happy Hour (at a place like Whistle Binkies) after the final practice of the season (a Thursday).

13) FYI-Rochester junior and senior high schools will have student classroom days now finish at 3:30 instead of 3pm. We will likely change our practice time to: Check-in 4pm. Practice start: 4:15pm. This may mean some 45 min practices in Dec and early January.

a) Agreed

14) 2. If we coaches feel a hands-on waxing night at an RPS school gym would be good, I (Barry) can set it up (we will, of course, check with Joan regarding if it is a covid-safe project to do in person). We skipped it last season (due to covid), but in prior years, it's been welcomed by the team. We have usually had 7+ coaches help out with wax benches, irons, etc). In the past, we have done it on a Wednesday night in early December. Comments? Suggestions?

a) Hold on a Wednesday, same time as practices.

The following are happenings/decisions made since our eos meeting last March:

15) Coach Joan Rabe has agreed to become the new attendance taker coordinator from Don Pankowski. Coach Maureen has supplied a list to Joan of those duties. Maureen will continue to assist Joan whenever possible. Thank you, Joan and Maureen!

16) This season we had 153 skiers participate, up from around 125 last year. We'll go with 170 as the max # this year, and potentially revisit the max if we find there is strong interest by far more skiers.

17) Captains for 2021-22 season:

Jack Archbold (Lourdes), Abigail Dewey (Stewartville), Hadley Jensen (Mayo), Lilly Keillor (Century), and Rachel Perry (Home School). Darald Bothun, David Herbert and Kristin Sorenson will serve as captain liaisons.

18) *A survey was taken of a fitting memorial to Don Pankowski; some worthy ideas were suggested, and the idea that the coaches agreed upon was a **Don Pankowski Memorial Attendance Award** to be presented at the end-of-season team banquet to the skier(s)(plural in case there is a tie) who had the best attendance record for team events (practices, meets, etc).*

19) The current ski groupings:

- a) The temporary creation of Group 4 was decided to be continued as it is useful. It does allow a group where previous 1st year skiers can go if they are not a clear fit for groups 1,2 or 3. But it also resulted in having to move some skiers back to one of the A-E groups (see item #20 below) and in big bunches of skiers moving up and down from week to week.
- b) Group 1 is now big, and has some super fast and strong skiers. Consider a Group 1A? Also, consider a girls-only Group 1?
- c) A concerned parent asked about their skier who has "good technique" but who can't ski fast due to asthma, and asked: is it possible to have a group for skiers with good technique who don't/can't ski fast? The answer is: *Our current program supports this. More communication with skiers of the option to move up/down could help. So the moral of the story is to keep up good dialogue between coaches and skiers*

20) For pre-snow dryland sessions, we will look to practice:

a) Outdoors at Quarry Hill, Essex Park, or Gamehaven.

b) Indoors at the RCTC dome (if available...COVID restrictions last year limited the number of people who could be in the dome).

c) Via Zoom.

The following are suggestions from coaches to help/improve our practices (these are mainly mind-joggers to implement this winter):

- 21) Move coaches around among the beginner groups.
- 22) Remind skiers at beginning of season that their coaches may move them to other groups and to not be surprised or take a downward move in a bad way.
- 23) Have veteran skiers help coach the beginner skiers now and then.
- 24) Rotate coaches among different groups so coaches can learn from each other.
- 25) Have Coach-the-Coaches session(s) this season. Possibly one dryland session and one on-snow. Probably on a weekend.
- 26) [RNST coaches need the *background check* renewed every 3 years. Steve Felton \(our RNST-RPS rep\) will be contacting coaches who need the renewal.](#)
- 27) Reminder to coaches who need a refresher on Concussions, Asthma, and other emergency situations, go to the RASC web page (<http://rochesteractivesportsclub.wildapricot.org/>), click on Rochester Nordic Ski Team and click on Coaches Corner; there, you will see links to online refresher courses.
- 28) FYI, RNST (plus a non-profit climate change concerned group (CCL) (of which some are RNST members)) did an Earth Week cleanup last May at Essex Park. It was a nice turnout with 20+ RNST members plus parents and some CCL members. A VW-beetle sized pile of trash was collected, plus a request was made to the Parks Dept to remove a pile of ugly orange temp fencing near the big bridge...and the city did remove it. :-)
- 29) Any new business?
- 30) Meeting adjourned. Thanks all. Think snow!